

# Our Revolution Maryland Questionnaire for U.S. Congressional Candidates, MD - District 6

*All Our Revolution Maryland endorsements are based on the input from those that live in the community. An Our Revolution Maryland endorsement begins with a recommendation from one of the official Our Revolution Maryland local groups. All questions and candidate responses will be made available to the public.*

**Candidates: Please return your completed questionnaire to Susannah Lapping ([susannahlapping@yahoo.com](mailto:susannahlapping@yahoo.com)) no later than Friday, February 9, 2018.**

1. Explain, based on life experiences and accomplishments, why you believe you are qualified to represent Maryland's 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District in the House of Representatives.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** I understand the opportunities and challenges facing people in Maryland's 6th Congressional District because I have lived them.

I fully understand that I have often been lucky enough in life to foresee events or developments a little ahead of my peers. Shortly after earning my PhD, I traveled to Hong Kong with no money and not knowing a single person there to pursue the idea of creating an emerging markets mutual fund when mutual funds in the US were still in their infancy. Later, I recognized how electricity production and markets could be radically restructured to benefit consumers, instead of the big utility companies. Anticipating the flexibility and competitiveness virtual supply chains could bring to small business, I led a small start-up company that developed the basic tools for building supply chains online long before others could see the demand for such technology. And in 2006, I saw the value of renewable energy for consumers and our planet, and became a small business owner, founding one of the first residential and commercial solar companies in Maryland.

Now I see we are facing one of the biggest problems of our generation -- a broken political system. This broken system lies at the heart of our increasingly divided society and an economy that only works for the wealthiest among us. In this new era, those with power -- whether they are corporate profiteers or career politicians -- simply do not prioritize the rest of us. They do not care if working folks have to choose between adequate health care and losing our homes; between taking a good-paying job and caring for our children; or between having a high-quality education for our children and having the transit and transportation solutions necessary to get to work.

I believe that for too long, billionaires, corporate CEOs, Wall Street insiders, and the insurance and pharmaceutical conglomerates have bought and paid for Congress. They have used their extraordinary economic power to rig the system for their own gain, without regard for how it affects the rest of us.

I'm running for Congress because I have a vision for our country where every child receives an education that fully prepares her to control her own destiny and where those who start out with less or are struggling are shielded from the risks that could derail them from achieving their

dreams. I see a country truly governed by the people, where the rules genuinely favor all of us and where we extend a helping hand to our fellow citizens when they stumble.

I believe I'm qualified because of my life experiences, because of my successes and my failures, and because I have a vision for how we can work together to help everyone reach their potential.

2a. If you are elected, what ethical principles or values will guide your public service? Support your answer with examples of how such principles or values have guided you in the past.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** I'm running for Congress because standing up for those who have been left behind has been a personal value I've held since he was a young boy. I grew up just south of Maryland's 6th, in Washington, DC during the 1960s after my parents moved from the segregated south to help build President Johnson's "Great Society." My mom, Ruth, headed up the Migrant Workers Division of the Office of Economic Opportunity, and would take me with her across our country to understand firsthand the hardships and challenges of the more vulnerable among us. My dad, Glenn, was a lawyer who hung a shingle down the street from the White House above the Old Ebbitt Grill. In addition to his usual clients for that time in our history, my dad represented the LGBTQ community and specifically, was a pioneer in the fight for transgender rights.

I was raised on the principles that everyone deserves a fair shake; that everyone can and should be lifted up to stand on their own two feet; and that wealth is not the true measure of a person's worth, nor does it entitle anyone to more say in how our society works. I firmly believe that regardless of our differences, all of us are entitled to the same rights and freedoms -- no matter where we started or the challenges we've faced along the way.

I'm running for Congress because I believe in my fellow Americans. Since our inception as an independent nation, we have aspired to great things. Unlike career politicians looking for their next stepping stone, my mission in Congress, will be to work ferociously to put our country back on course to be the country we want it to be.

2b. Will you support and work to adopt the Democratic Party Unity Reform Commission recommendations?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** While I support the initial intent of the Commission's formation, I don't think the recommendations that were approved go far enough. Certainly, we should start with eliminating all super delegates – a party that is supposed to be representative should not have a process by which one group has a bigger say over the Party's activities than everyday party activists and loyalists. I'm a lifelong Democrat, but the 2016 primary election process made me think that the Party no longer had room for people like me. The Democratic National

Committee needs to be more transparent in all of its activities so that we again have faith and confidence in the Party. The DNC needs to be the facilitator of increasing participation in our elections, not deciding our elections. We need more diverse voices to be a critical part of the rebuilding process – young people, people of color, and party activists who are not multi-millionaires – if we are to have a representative Democratic Party that is vibrant, inclusive and building for a new era of politics.

2c. Do you support small donor campaign match legislation for all Maryland elections?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** I support public financing of all campaigns and eliminating big money/special interest financing from campaigns entirely. As a first-time candidate, I can tell you that the current system is stacked against ordinary folks who want to make a difference by running for office. Special interests and corporate influencers are dumping literally billions of dollars into our electoral system so that they can influence the outcome of elections by electing lawmakers who will do their bidding. The rest of us who expect a representative democracy don't stand a chance. We have to make sure the playing field is not rigged and everyone has a chance to make their voices heard.

### CIVIL RIGHTS

3a. Will you support HR 2840 (Automatic Voter Registration)?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** I fully support any and all efforts to automatically register citizens to vote. I would want to explore expanding automatic voter registration to include more government agencies and offices beyond departments of motor vehicles. We know that there are people who don't own cars or have driver licenses who will never visit the DMV – even for a government-issued ID. How do we register them to vote so that they can participate fully in our elections? We should expand to include automatic voter registration sites at all service-oriented government offices (libraries, post offices, social security offices, courthouses, public universities, etc.).

3b. Describe any other federal legislation and policy changes that you support in order to address the ongoing effects of slavery, racism, colonialism, and discrimination on people of color in America today.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** The systemic and institutionalized racism, colonialism, and religious discrimination in our country has limited opportunities for people of color in our country for literally hundreds of years. As an ally to non-white/non-Christian communities, I have a responsibility to use my white privilege to call attention to and fight against the racism and bigotry that currently prevails within our government and societal institutions. Let me be clear: I believe that Black Lives Matter. I believe that Civil War monuments built to intimidate and segregate Black Americans from our shared society should be removed. I believe that immigration is necessary to creating a country that leads and succeeds on all levels. And I believe that DREAMERS belong in America. At the end of the day, the only people who are not immigrants are indigenous people who were here long before any of us.

Most of the barriers to people of color advancing and succeeding at the same rate as their white counterparts can be traced back to government-sanctioned inequality. Partisan and racial gerrymandering have rigged our elections to support predominately wealthy, white males. Our nation's law enforcement – from the biggest city to the smallest town – have profiled, detained, arrested and incarcerated people of color in overwhelmingly disproportionate margins compared to white people. Our criminal justice system is in dire need of reform in the areas of sentencing guidelines, juvenile justice and reintroducing rehabilitative programs within the prison system. According to the ACLU, a black person in the U.S. is 3.7 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than a white person – despite approximately equal rates of use. Changing the laws is a first step; but changing attitudes and prejudices within the law enforcement community will require a bigger commitment from our society – including our elected officials. I want to be a part of that conversation and work towards solutions that so desperately need to occur in our country.

Finally, I believe that economic inequality is one of the biggest issues facing our country today – for all citizens, but specifically for people of color. We've got to provide all people the economic power and support they deserve to chart their own path to success. That's why I support a guaranteed income; a quality education that prepares all of our children to achieve their destiny; and a health care system that doesn't leave a family bankrupt when they are faced with an unexpected accident or illness.

### EDUCATION

4a. Will you support HR 1880 (College for All Act)?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** I support the goal of tuition-free education at public colleges and universities for families making \$125,000 or less. Families and students should not be forced

into years of crushing debt simply to receive an education. Other countries provide free education to their citizens. America should, too. It's a sound investment in the future of our country. We are competing in a global economy and providing free education to working families will give us all the competitive edge we need to succeed.

I would like to study the payment mechanism to finance the College for All Act. The issue I have is with financing – a better way for example might be to provide an “endowment bond” to every child born within the income bracket, adjusted for inflation. The bond would grow over time and when a child is ready for higher education, the bond will have matured and be ready to pay for private or public education. This bond could be financed by tax dollars once the tax system is restructured to ensure that the wealthy and corporations pay their fair share.

4b. What other legislation or other policy changes do you support in order to make college and graduate school affordable for poor, working-class, and middle-class Americans and to alleviate the crushing loan debt that many students and alumni are facing?

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** In addition to the College for All Act, I would support any legislation that reduces or eliminates the cost of higher education for low-income and middle-income families. We can and should support increased funds for job training, propose laws to reduce student debt (until free higher education is a reality), and expand access to college credit for high school students.

But I also think we should start with a guaranteed income for every American. I'd like to establish rules of the game that would work for our families instead of the wealthy few – enabling anyone to have advanced education opportunities no matter where they start in life.

### HEALTH CARE

5a. Do you support a single-payer universal health care system?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** Absolutely, I support affordable universal health care. The question for me is what's the most efficient and dynamic way to do this? It may be that single-payer proves to be the best way. But I think there's a better way. Everyone thinks of insurance companies as intermediaries, but insurance companies are there to shoulder most of the cost and manage risk. Let's change the rules in the insurance industry so we take the burden of the cost of health care off of taxpayers and back onto the insurance companies. That means one pool for each insurance company and a national plan instead of state-specific plans. The Government could cap the total cost borne by the insured at the lower-end of the pay scale while allowing insurance companies to charge the wealthy more. Then, we would use single-payer for pre-

existing and ongoing conditions (like accidents, cancer, etc.) to cover those costs.

5b. Will you support HR 676 (Medicare for All)?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** Please see my answer above. Let's find a way to pay for health care for all that doesn't place the burden on taxpayers but shifts it to insurance companies.

If you answered no, what other legislation or other policy changes do you support in order to ensure that all Americans have access to quality affordable health care?

5c. What legislation will you support or introduce to prevent and treat opioid abuse, as well as punish irresponsible pharmaceutical purveyors of opioid and other addictive painkillers?

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** My wife, Stephanie, and I went to Allegany County earlier this year to participate in a community training after reading about how bad the opioid crisis is in this country -- particularly in rural areas. When we saw a Facebook post about a training in Little Orleans at the volunteer fire department, we decided to go to the training to learn first hand about how communities in our district are responding to the crisis. I wanted to better understand about the nature of opioid addiction and the devastating effects it has on small communities throughout the country. We were trained on how to help someone who had overdosed and met with a drug counselor who is a recovering heroin addict. I learned so much from her story and the stories from law enforcement and first responders who are on the frontlines of this health crisis.

I would support and/or sponsor legislation that will improve access to prevention, treatment and recovery services for addicts. It is important to offer opioid addiction treatment in jails and prisons, including offering medication that will reverse overdoses to addicts upon release from jail when many are most vulnerable to overdosing after forced detox in jail or prison.

At the same time we need to find alternate pain management techniques and medications that are not opioid based. And we need to hold pharmaceutical companies that are literally making a killing off of life-saving overdose reversing medications accountable. Pharmaceutical companies that are raising prices on naxalone, Narcan and Evzio -- all drugs that can reverse overdoses -- need to be held to account and made to pay for pricing life-saving medications out of reach for addicts and first responders who care for them.

If elected, I will propose legislation establishing penalties against pharmaceutical companies

that price gouge that effectively would bankrupt any pharmaceutical company engaging in such predatory behavior. By making penalties so catastrophic as to destroy the companies if the fines were levied against them, it's my belief that pharmaceutical companies will make these drugs more available and affordable so that more people will be able to afford these critical anti-overdosing medications.

### REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

6. Will you support HR 771 (Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance [EACH Woman] Act)?

Yes

No

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** I fully support the repeal of the Hyde Amendment and any other law, rule, or executive order designed to eliminate federal funding of abortion care for women who rely on the federal government for their health care. As a member of Congress, I will sign on to the EACH Woman Act.

Discuss your stance on reproductive rights, including access to contraceptives and abortion services.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** I trust women. I believe politicians should never come between a woman and her doctor when it comes to reproductive health -- from contraception to abortion. This is not a women's issue, this is a human issue. I believe that Roe was rightly decided (as was Griswold in 1965) and that a woman's right to decide what's best for her health comes first.

The right to decide when and how to start a family (or not) is fundamental to women's economic and societal autonomy. The constant chipping away at the fundamental promise of Roe has made it nothing more than an illusion for too many women -- especially low-income women, women of color, immigrant women and LGBTQIA women.

I stand with Planned Parenthood and will fight any attempt by anti-choice politicians to eliminate federal funding for Planned Parenthood and critical services it provides.

Finally, the government should have no role in denying women access to contraception, abortion care or any other reproductive health care through their employer-provide insurance plans or state insurance exchange plans.

### CRIMINAL JUSTICE

7. Will you support HR 3227 (Justice is Not For Sale Act)?

Yes

No

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** The ACLU estimates that for-profit prisons house approximately 6% of state prisoners, 16% of all federal prisoners, and a staggering 50% of immigrants detained by the federal government. When the business model for a company or industry is mass incarceration, there is no incentive for that industry to provide training, education, mental health services or drug treatment to help rehabilitate inmates and prepare them for life beyond prison. The incentive is to keep people in jail for as long as possible and continue to imprison them at the lowest cost per person possible. It is a heinous and despicable business model and we must take steps to end it.

It is up to our elected officials to end the practice of taxpayer funds being used to pay for private companies to reap the profits for incarcerating people in this country. There must be job training, drug treatment, mental health services and education offered to people in our prisons. That will never happen with for-profit prisons and I will work to end it when elected.

What other federal legislation do you support in order to make the American criminal justice system fairer, less costly, and more effective at rehabilitation?

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** I'm very much in favor of prison reform and believe that serving time for crimes should be about rehabilitation in addition to punishment. We need to provide services to bring people back into their communities with the skills and support they need to not be recidivism statistics.

I support real sentencing reform that would reduce mandatory minimum sentences for non-violent offenses and giving judges more discretion in sentencing non-violent defendants. Retroactively reducing sentences for non-violent drug offenders would reduce costs and free people who have been unjustly imprisoned for drug offenses.

I would support or sponsor legislation that brings about real, sustainable and measurable criminal justice reform. We need better training of law enforcement personnel, especially to deter police from profiling and harassing people of color. It is imperative we increase funding for public defenders at the local, state and federal level so that everyone who is entitled to an attorney receives real representation, regardless of their ability to pay. And for those who are sent to prison, we need real prison reform that treats people humanely and provides services aimed at rehabilitating and preparing for release.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

8. What federal legislation or other policy changes do you support in order (A) to reduce America's carbon footprint and (B) to protect and maintain America's remaining wilderness, parks, open spaces, and wetlands and (C) recognize, ameliorate, and reduce the sources of

Climate Change?

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:**

**Carbon Footprint:** The most direct ways to reduce our carbon footprint is either to create a market for carbon or require the immediate implementation of known carbon-free or low-carbon technologies or some combination of both. For the carbon market to work properly, it would among other things have to be structured so that prices for products or services where low-carbon technologies already existed were allowed more freely and those where technologies did not exist were managed such that they would escalate over time to both create incentives and allow time for innovation.

For those areas that we already know to be large emitters of carbon such as transportation, agriculture and cement manufacturing, we should require monitoring in the first tier of participants in the market, with other carbon emitters being phased into the market over time.

Where we know at least basic technologies already exist, we should set outcome-based standards that would force emitters within a limited but feasible time frame to retrofit existing operations and incorporate the technologies into new operations. For example we can induce a much more rapid shift to renewable energy and even natural gas as an interim fuel if we were to set targets for the sources of electricity and heating, e.g. 100% renewably sourced electricity within 3 years. Similarly, I would advocate for local building codes to set targets for energy usage, building techniques and materials used based on carbon emissions.

**Protect and maintain America's remaining wilderness, parks, open spaces, and wetlands:** As a first step, I would reverse the current administration's plans to scale back our national parks. I would also oppose the administration's recent proposed rollback of environmental rules and restrictions on large infrastructure projects.

While my personal inclination is to preserve what remains of our unspoiled environment in its current state and to restore certain portions of our spoiled environment such as the Chesapeake Bay, it seems inevitable that there are going to be times where a trade-off exists between preserving the environment as it currently exists and permitting human intrusions. Housing is an example. Simply put, our population is growing which requires more housing. In response, we build out until we cannot build out any longer, at which point we build up. Determining where to stop building out is a very complicated question, the answer to which allocating a certain amount of green space begs the question.

For those portions of our environment that remain unspoiled as of today and those portions that though spoiled are clearly essential to our survival such as the Chesapeake Bay for clean drinking water and a food source, I would advocate for ways of identifying those that damage it and imposing the full cost of remediation upon them. As one step, we could start with requiring states to monitor cross-border flows of pollutants and compensating each other for remediation. This in turn would put pressure on the states to focus on identifying the actual

polluters within their states to whom they could pass through the remediation costs.

For other less clear circumstances such as that of land development for housing, we need a way of determining the value to us of keeping the land in question unspoiled. We need this value both to determine not only to determine whether it outweighs the value to us of using the land for housing in the proposed manner but also to provide signals to the market that would stimulate developing new housing practices and technologies that would better integrate with rather than replace the natural environment. For this I would favor a market-based solution. Such solutions exist, but I am not as yet familiar with them.

**Recognize, ameliorate, and reduce the sources of Climate Change:** (see above for reduce - Set targets and create a market for carbon and other GHG gases) Current climate change models have yielded considerable insight into the nature of the effects of climate change and how the different regions of the country will be affected. At the federal level I would propose that the states be required to develop indicators and implement systems for monitoring the anticipated effects. They would also be required to develop strategies for ameliorating the effects. These plans would be fast-tracked and partially funded by the Federal government.

The state plans would be synchronized with Federal plans to identify and resolve any conflicts (such as states pushing residents in hurricane prone areas or areas that are likely to flood to move elsewhere or adopt different building techniques vs. the Federal government encouraging residents not to adapt by offering them discounted insurance) and developing funding strategies to support the amelioration plans.

9. Do you support or oppose TransCanada's proposed pipeline under the C&O Canal and Potomac River at Hancock, Maryland?

\_\_\_\_\_ Support

\_\_\_X\_\_\_ Oppose

Please elaborate.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** I'm skeptical of underground pipeline, especially at this location with the fragility of the ecosystem. As a big proponent of renewable energy (my wife and I own a small solar panel installation company in the district) , I believe that we must find alternatives to our fossil fuel dependency. I understand the need of our neighbors in West Virginia to find ways to expand economic development in the panhandle area of the state. But I don't believe that destroying a very fragile ecosystem that is also a tourist destination is the best way to achieve that goal.

We can work with West Virginia neighbors to find alternative energy sources that will provide

the economic development they need. Perhaps a public/private development fund that attracts private investors while establishing a process to stringently vet proposals to see if they make financial and environmental sense for the particular area. The federal government can help with partial grants or financial guarantees.

### ECONOMIC JUSTICE

10a. In order to reduce wealth and income inequality and poverty - including unemployment, homelessness, and food insecurity – (A) Do you support raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour or above? (B) What additional steps do you believe the federal government should take to reduce income and wealth inequality?

#### **CHRIS' RESPONSE:**

- A. I support raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 (or more)/hour but don't believe that anything below \$30/hour (in Montgomery County) equates to a living wage for most hourly workers. Our country needs a real plan for creating jobs that provide a future and opportunity for risk-takers.

Our country, our state and our district are suffering from the uneven economic growth that we are seeing across regions and within different segments of our population. We see that right here in CD-06, where economies in the western counties are stagnating and there are high poverty rates while in other areas of the district, wages and opportunities are expanding.

We see Income inequality that is both a constraint on growth and a symptom of disproportionate market power for the wealthiest among us. One cause of income inequality that we see with low-paying jobs is stagnating wages among the lower and middle-class among us. A lack of support services such as affordable housing, public transportation, affordable daycare, and healthcare options, inhibits access to jobs for many working families. I believe we should provide these services as social cost borne by companies and adjusted for in trade subsidies and tariffs or facilitate competition among firms for labor with this as one of the amenities. When I'm elected to Congress, I will work to find solutions to these problems and ask others to join me in finding solutions.

- B. The federal government can and should address the systemic and disproportionate negative effect the wealthiest individuals and corporations are having on our economy. The barriers to organizing for labor unions are too high. There is no labor representation on most corporate boards so workers have no say in company policy even though they are the ones providing the goods and services that make the CEOs and board members wealthy. Shareholders have no control over the Board of Directors or the political contributions corporations are legally entitled to make to influence elections. All of these are issues that

should be debated and legislated in Washington.

But it goes beyond the changes to our economic system. We must creatively address the failure of our current education system to prepare students with skills and knowledge they need to be the leaders and risk-takers in tomorrow's economy. Our children need to learn how to take control of their own destinies. Our teachers are underpaid, overworked, and are required to prepare our kids for the next standardized test. If we want a better economic and societal future for our children, education inequality has to be addressed.

10b. Will you support HR 15 (Raise the Wage Act)?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** I'm very concerned that the market response to an increase in the minimum wage will adversely affect the very people it is designed to help. Corporations have proven to be unscrupulous when it comes to paying their employees a fair and livable wage and I am fearful that people will lose their jobs. I would like to explore a guaranteed income for people trying to survive below the poverty level. The time has come to find a way to lift people out of poverty and to offer creative solutions to the current situation we find ourselves in. It is not sustainable for people to work two and three jobs just to survive. We can and should be doing better. In Congress, I'll champion the working class and advocate for increased training and education opportunities; work to make it easier for working people to organize and much harder for employers to resist organizing; and ask others in Congress to join me to reverse the corporate tax rate so everyone pays their fair share. We all need to bare the cost in a way that's fair to all.

10c. Will you support HR 1144 (Inclusive Prosperity Act) tax on Wall Street?

Yes

No

Please elaborate.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** On one hand, we want to address and correct the harmful practices on Wall Street. At the same time, we want to provide tuition-free education to people of a certain income level. I believe we need to separate the two issues and address each separately. Otherwise, I'm afraid that both outcomes we seek will not materialize and we won't be able to correct either problem.

Let me be clear that I believe Congress should attack the bad practices on Wall Street by outlawing them; and when I am elected I will take that fight to Washington. Insider trading is a

common practice but Congress has defined it in such a way that it can't be prosecuted. Derivatives are horrible for the economy because most people who purchase and use them don't understand how the instrument actually works. I'd propose any derivative goes through a vetting process similar to new drugs.

I also believe that Congress should set rules to establish a common tax policy with trading partners throughout the world. It makes no sense for corporations like Google to establish a headquarters in Ireland simply to avoid a higher corporate tax rate in the U.S. It's not fair for our workers and we need to fix it.

10d. Provide *specific* details of how you would attack the on-going economic and social disparities which continue to impact women, including the gender pay gap, inadequate Social Security benefits particularly for elderly women, the lack of paid family leave in many cases, the lack of adequate child care, and discrimination in all of its forms against Women of Color.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** Let's start with finally passing the Equal Rights Amendment. It is shameful that in 2018 all women -- and notably women of color -- are still paid less than men, face employment discrimination based on their gender (and race), and are disproportionately victims of violence perpetrated by men. We need leaders in Congress -- both women and men - - who will champion women's and girls' empowerment; fund STEM programs to advance women and girls in math and science education and careers; provide affordable, accessible daycare for women of all ages and backgrounds so that they can advance while raising their families; provide federally mandated paid sick leave and paid maternity and parental leave; and provide universal coverage for pregnancy, contraception and reproductive health care. We also need to find a creative solution to the Social Security problem facing many women -- they receive less in benefits than men, even though they have a longer life expectancy. It's not fair that women who have taken time away from the traditional workforce to raise a family receive less benefits than men.

#### CAMPAIGN FINANCE/CORPORATE INFLUENCE

11. Do you support a Constitutional Amendment to repeal the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United*?

Yes

No

Explain your answer above and include any other solutions that you propose for the problem of undue influence over legislators exercised by large corporations and the very wealthy.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** I do not believe that corporations are people, too. We need to end the scourge of untraceable, unlimited money in politics. I support real change: publicly financed campaigns to allow real citizens like me to run for office -- not just the wealthy who can self-

fund or career politicians who take special-interest corporate money in exchange for their votes. Bernie Sanders proved that there is power in grassroots activism and small-dollar donors can make a difference. We need to elect people who will stand up to corporate interests and billionaires. I will.

12. To your knowledge, have any lobbyists, CEOs, or corporate lawyers contributed to your campaign? If so, please identify them and the steps you have taken to ensure that you will not vote on any matters in which they or any such donors have a financial interest.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** No lobbyists, CEOs or corporate lawyers have contributed to my campaign.

### SEXISM/SEXUAL HARASSMENT

13. What federal legislation or policy changes do you support in order (A) to address the disadvantages that women face due to the ongoing effects of sexism and (B) to stop sexual harassment in the workplace? Include in your answer actions that Congress should take to protect staffers, employees and interns.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:**

- A. We know that in America – from teenage to retirement – women make less than men. That has to change if our country is truly to be the land of opportunity for all. The Lily Ledbetter Act of 2009 was a first step and I supported that Congressional action and President Obama's signature to make it law.

Additionally, I supported President Obama's 2016 rule – the rule that Pres. Trump halted from taking effect last year – that would have required businesses with more than 100 employees to report how much they pay employees by race and gender. While there were some potential problems with reporting the data to the EEOC, the rule would have made companies more conscious of pay disparities and could have encouraged them to improve their behavior.

Beyond these specific instances, it's important to pass a variety of legislative measures that will begin to address the rampant sexism with regard to work and family. I support women-friendly initiatives such as paid sick leave, the Family Medical Leave Act, a guaranteed income or a real and sustainable increase in the federal minimum wage; and including maternity care, contraceptive coverage and abortion care in health insurance plans.

- B. Sexual harassment in the workplace is devastating for women who experience it -- and too many women have faced harassment in the workplace. Congress must set the example for private businesses to follow. Sadly, it is evident that harassment has for too long gone unchallenged on the Hill. I support Rep. Jackie Spears' ME TOO Act that, if passed, will hold lawmakers accountable and make the process of reporting sexual harassment more transparent and supportive for the victim. Mandatory training for Members of Congress, staff

and interns should be required. And the price of misconduct and harassment by anyone against women must be steep. Until Congress cleans up its own house, it cannot expect to have any moral authority over the actions of private businesses. We simply must do better by and for women throughout government and private industry. Let's start with cleaning up all three branches of government and lead by example.

### HOMOPHOBIA

14. Describe or identify federal legislation that you would support in order to address the discrimination faced by the LGBTQIA community.

**RESPONSE:** Too many LGBTQIA folks face discrimination in employment, in public accommodations and in their family life. Many cis-gendered/heterosexual people – even allies – do not understand that lived equality for the LGBTQIA community was not accomplished with the Supreme Court's marriage equality ruling in 2015. As the story goes: you can get married on Sunday, refused service on Monday and fired on Tuesday when you identify as LGBTQI. We know it's even worse for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals.

First and foremost, I support and, when elected to Congress, would co-sponsor the Equality Act, the Freedom from Discrimination in Credit Act, the Student Non-Discrimination Act and the Fair and Equal Housing Act. I support legislation banning so-called conversion therapy, so-called bathroom bills, and discrimination against potential adoptive or foster parents based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status.

I have no tolerance for discrimination against LGBTQIA folks and will stand strongly against any efforts in Congress to legislate hate. My dad was a pioneer when he legally represented a transgender client in the late 1960s. My campaign manager is a proud member of the LGBTQ community in Maryland's 6<sup>th</sup> CD. My wife has a transgender member of her immediate family. These issues are more than political to me. They are personal. As a member of Congress, I will fight tirelessly to ensure that every LGBTQIA person has the opportunity for lived equality, not only legislated equality.

### FOREIGN POLICY

15a. Identify changes to our foreign policy that you would support in Congress. Include in your thoughts on (A) America's recent and continuing military actions in the Middle East, (B) the number and size of American military bases in foreign countries, (C) international trade deals, (D) providing emergency humanitarian aid versus nation-building.

I believe that the United States cannot retreat from the world, but that war should be the last option. We live in a world that can be chaotic, where bad people rise to power and suppress the rights of their citizens. A world where countries try to impose their will on other countries. We must engage that world, but we must engage them with words first and foremost. We must engage bad actors with the moral authority that comes with bringing those who share our

values to conversation. The current administration practices a foreign policy that leads with war. That is not acceptable and congress needs to hold them accountable for their actions.

When it comes to foreign policy, my basic view is that the US can be an influence for good. Specifically, it should promote the ideals of democracy and the rule of law internationally. The best way we can do that is first to get our own house in order by truly being the democratic republic we purport to be. Second, while I understand our concerns about sovereignty, we must commit ourselves fully to international institutions such as the International Criminal Court and to establishing a comprehensive body of international law that is fair. For example, while we have laws in the US that regulate predatory investment in assets that have been or are about to be defaulted on, no such laws exist to govern the process of resolving a default by a government on its debt.

These steps are not only the right steps ethically, but they would also give us more credibility with other nations when we ask them to stand with us against actions perpetrated by Russia, China or Iran on the grounds that they threaten democracy or violate international law.

Another virtue of international institutions would be that they would provide other methods for resolving conflict such international censorship or forgiveness of debts owed by the perpetrating nation as alternatives to war.

I would favor intervention as a last resort and only where we could be effective, and where the motivation was to protect innocent lives, to defend our borders, to defend an existing democracy, aid an emerging democracy or to punish a violation of international law.

As a further step to promote peace, human rights and international law, it would behoove the US to consolidate our different military based alliances into a single, highly-integrated organization of nations with shared values for the purposes of military and economic cooperation.

Because I believe we do not have a clear understanding of our military role in the world, of how we will play this role in conjunction with other nations and because our Department of Defense cannot account accurately for the money it spends, I would favor a 20% reduction in the military's budget. This magnitude of reduction is called for because it is the minimum necessary for real efficiency gains, a goal that the DoD is notably inattentive to, and is sufficient inducement to force the DoD to genuinely choose priorities.

A. America's recent and continuing actions in the middle east.

We all know now that the war with Iraq was a colossal mistake. But given what members of congress knew at the time, they should not have supported the war. Arguments supporting the war were specious and thin. I would have not supported entering into the war. I support removing all US troops out of Afghanistan and Syria. I support the continuation of the Iran nuclear accord.

B. The number and size of military bases in foreign countries.

The United States still maintains 800 military bases in more than 70 countries and territories

abroad at an estimated cost of nearly \$100 billion dollars annually. By comparison, Britain, France and Russia have a total of 30 military bases combined. (Vine, Poltico, 2015). This is more than we spend on any non-military discretionary budget item. We need to seriously assess the number and size of military bases we have around the world. While I understand that we have obligations to our allies and to the world to defend freedom, support human rights and to protect our citizens, the answer is to build strength through diplomacy not through subjugation.

C. International Trade Deals

We live in a global economy. We cannot put up walls and ignore the opportunity to use trade to enrich not only American lives, but the lives of people around the world. However, our current modus operandi is to enter into trade agreements that are designed to enrich multinational corporations at the expense of our global environment and to the detriment of workers who fall prey to these corporations both domestically and abroad. Any trade agreement must ensure that environmental and labor standards are improved in the countries we are engaging with. Globalization also means that jobs will continually shift throughout the world. It is the responsibility of our government to constantly train and retrain our workforce to be able to compete and work in our changing economy.

D. Providing emergency humanitarian aid versus nation building

As the richest nation on earth, we have a responsibility help those who are in need. We should not only support those who are in immediate crisis, but we also need to support institutions and governments who are truly invested in improving the lives of their citizens. This however does not mean creating them in our own image. We cannot ignore the world around us and through the proper administration of aid we can strive to create stability, improve lives and increase individual freedom. I see foreign aid as not only a tool to help during crisis, but as a means to avoiding future conflict.

15b. Do you support or oppose President Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and his order that the U.S. Embassy be relocated to Jerusalem?

\_\_\_\_\_ Support

\_\_\_X\_\_\_ Oppose

Please elaborate.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** Moving the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem sends the message that the U.S. is abandoning any hope of peace in the Middle East and that a two-state solution for peace between Israel and the Palestinians is not possible. Currently, 86 countries have their embassies in Tel Aviv and zero have an embassy in Jerusalem. Beyond the national security concerns that moving the embassy would raise, the setback to any opportunity for peace would have repercussions for years to come. I believe that President Trump is being purposefully provocative and is appealing to a fringe element of his evangelical base in order to score political points.

15c. Discuss actions and positions you would take which would be designed to reduce or

eliminate the United States' reliance on military force.

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** First and foremost, our government should always start at a position of diplomacy rather than force. Our federal budget needs to reflect that mindset and move away from the current Administration's fixation on military might over diplomatic dialogue. Let's restore funding to the State Department and direct the Administration to fill top diplomatic posts that have been left vacant for more than a year. We need to restore funding for global health initiatives like HIV AIDS prevention, maternal health, as well as newborn and children's health initiatives. Expanding funding to USAID for international disaster relief, poverty reduction and strengthening democracy strengthens our country's security and reduces the need for military force. We need a Congress that will put diplomacy first and resist efforts by the president to use our military to defend against his utter lack of diplomatic outreach.

### CONCLUSION

16. What additional information would you like Our Revolution Maryland to consider when we are making our endorsements decisions?

**CHRIS' RESPONSE:** I am a first-time candidate who decided to run for Congress because I want a country that works for all of us. I was inspired by Senator Sanders' campaign in 2016 and hope to be able to join him in Washington to work on the issues that will advance and improve the lives of everyday working Americans. Thank you for the opportunity to share some of my ideas with you.

### **RESPONSE FORTHCOMING**

Please certify by signing below that the above or attached answers reflect your policy views at the time of signature.

Sign: 

Print your name: Chris Graves

Date: February 25, 2018